

"Welcome to the Fall issue of Volume 8 of our newsletter. Into the Autumn season of chillier days and inside delights; The season of Sports and the Holidays. As ever, new technologies can brighten our lives! In that spirit, we're offering some of our insights into a fun and exciting industry. Thank you for your interest."

Technology Alert!!

Occasionally a new technology comes along that is exciting enough to warrant a column in our newsletter!

The product is "Audyssey". When added to an existing home theater or family viewing area, Audyssey dramatically improves audio and in particular surround sound performance.

If you have ever exclaimed "I cannot understand the dialogue" or "I can never hear all my speakers" you will greatly appreciate the magical improvements this device can provide.

It seems many, if not most, listening and viewing rooms are sonically compromised by the "acoustics" of the nearby environment. An aesthetically inviting Family Room may have severe "sonic" limitations.

No matter how great your loudspeakers and electronics are the end results can be easily handicapped by echoes and other debilitating effects produced in your space.

Until recently, our only recourse was to suggest a new carpet or drapes to improve or "soften" the acoustics somewhat. Not always easily accomplished.

Enter Audyssey..... www.audyssey.com

Incorporated (built-in) into a few high quality

Surround Sound Receivers and Processors, Audyssey utilizes an additional equalizer circuit along with test tones and microphones to evaluate the sound quality of a given area.

It then uses that information to send a "correcting" signal to the amplifier before being fed to the loudspeakers.

The results are fantastic!

Many years of research at USC were required to produce the final "algorithm" working the magic with Audyssey. I'm using an Audyssey processor at home and the performance of my already good system has been put into orbit! I'm never going back!

Of course, there is some expense with an upgrade of this nature, but if you are enthusiastic about getting the sound "right", contact us for an estimate or a demonstration.

I will personally guarantee your satisfaction. The products will be removed and money will be refunded if you are not happy with the improvement.

Thanks for taking some of your valuable time to read this update. Feel free to call anytime for more details about Audyssey or anything home electronic.

Plasma vs LCD

The battle over flat panel superiority marches on in 2008...

Good News! Both LCD and Plasma offer jaw dropping picture quality. Competition breeds really good TVs!

For example, Pioneer and Panasonic's current

(continued from page 1...)

line of plasma displays offer the deepest, darkest "Blacks" we have seen on any display. Reproduction of Black can no longer be described as the "Achilles' Heel" of flat panel designs.

Not to be outdone, Sony and other LCD manufacturers have countered with models utilizing "LED Back Lighting" and "Local Dimming"; coming remarkably close to the inky blacks produced by the best plasmas.

Plus, LCD products are still better suited to a brightly lit environment. Brighter images and glare resistant surfaces really make a difference when installing a Sunroom TV!

1920 by 1080 (or 1080p) has become the standard resolution for both technologies. 2 million pixels! Although, for those seeking value, there are still 1360 by 768 (or 720p) products available that are quite a bit less expensive and still look fabulous!

While shopping, you will find that sizes are not consistent between LCD and Plasma. Plasmas are found primarily in 42", 50", 58" and 65". LCD manufacturers use 40", 46", 52", and 65"

Whether you prefer LCD or Plasma; we almost always recommend a bigger set! HDTV just gets better on larger screens.

Super sized flat panels are available; albeit, at a price. Sony recently introduced a 70" (\$20,000) LCD, while Panasonic is actually shipping a 103" (\$70,000) Plasma. 500lbs! Even larger prototypes have been shown off at trade shows and media events.

Plasma manufacturers have discontinued production of panels less than 42". There are however, a plethora (17", 19", 22", 26", 32", 37") of quality LCD displays to compensate for the

lack of plasma in smaller sizes.

Interestingly, Sony just introduced an 11" OLED display which may be the future of flat panel technology, if you must have "World Class" video for the kitchen counter! \$2500.

Call for more information on LCD and Plasma.

A System for the New Millennium

Many moons ago, I worked at a small audio company in the Twin Cities called "Sound of Music" In those days (1976), we put together "Audio Systems".

Television sales were left to the department stores :)

Each system included 2 Loudspeakers, Receiver (an amplifier and am/fm tuner combined) and a turntable. For example, 2 Advent "Larger" Loudspeakers, a Sony STRD 7055a Receiver, a Kenwood KX620 Cassette Deck, and a Dual 1225 turntable would be priced together for around \$870 (in 1976 dollars!).

I still kind of remember how to set up a turntable? Align the phone cartridge and set the tracking force. Wow the good old days!

I thought it might be fun to put together a new millennium audio "System". Fortunately, Supercalibrations handles a couple of the best values in audio: PSB loudspeakers and NAD amplifiers. PSB's Alpha B bookshelf speakers were recently awarded "Budget Loudspeaker of the Year" from Stereophile magazine. NAD's integrated amplifiers sound like products costing 10 times as much.

(continued from page 2...)

No turntable or cassette required in the new millennium, but how about an iPod dock and an Sony 5 disc CD player? The icing on the cake would be an HD Radio AM/FM tuner from Sony. HD Radio can even make AM sound great! Not an easy task.

Ok here's the deal:

PSB Alpha B Loudspeakers	\$279 pr.
NAD C315BEE integrated amp	\$349
Sony CDPCE 375 5 disc CD player	\$119
Sony XDRF1HD AM/FM HD Radio	\$ 99
iPod dock (iPod not included)	\$149
Subtotal	\$995
Newsletter discount on "System"	\$ -99
Total	\$896

For reference, \$870 from 1976, when corrected for inflation becomes \$3350 in today's \$\$\$... (see <http://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/cpicalc.pl>).

That means you can buy a much better system for about one quarter of the price of 30 years ago! I am sure you will be amazed at the "audiophile" sound of this "System" It's a Music Lovers delight!

PS. Sound of Music eventually evolved into Best Buy Co!

Digital TV Transition

I am sure you have heard about next year's transition to "all digital" television broadcasts in the USA. Currently (by FCC mandate) most television stations are duplicating their signal on both Digital and Analog frequencies.

Here in the Twin Cities, analog channels are:

2, 4, 5, 9, 11, 17, 23, 29, 41 and 45.

digital channels are:

16, 21, 22, 26, 32, 34, 35, 40, 44 and 50.

On February 17th, 2009 all the analog channels will be permanently turned off! Actually, this will save TV stations a bunch of money, as broadcasting two channels simultaneously uses a significant amount of electricity.

The government benefits, as well. They are selling the old channels to a variety of businesses for about 10 billion dollars. The remaining "Spectrum" will be used for fire and other public safety purposes

Cable and Satellite companies are currently providing access to a majority of both analog and digital channels. In fact, if you have cable or satellite service, you should NOT need any additional equipment to continue viewing after the transition. Even basic cable subscribers will continue to access local channels as cable providers will convert digital signals to analog - at least for the foreseeable future.

FYI: Around 85 percent of the viewing audience has cable or satellite

For those using a roof or attic mounted antenna, or an indoor (rabbit ears) antenna of one sort or another; updating equipment will be required.

If you:

1. use an antenna, 2. do not have the new "ATSC" digital tuner in your television or set top box: The new "digital" channels will not be viewable (nor any channels at all, after February 19th!).

In fact, on a TV with an old "NTSC" analog tuner, digital channels (like "35") look much like a blank or "snowy" analog channel. Adding an outboard Digital tuner or set top box will allow you to continue using your "analog only" television. These are the Converter Boxes you've probably heard of. You know, "send in for a coupon and buy the box at the local Best Buy".

There is a happy ending to the digital transition! The picture and sound on these channels are noticeably cleaner and sharper than analog. No ghosts allowed on Digital!!

(continued from page 3...)

In addition, if you own an HDTV, most of the digital channels will be broadcasting in super high resolution 1080i or 720p formats that look amazingly clear. Yeah!!

One caveat to all the fun: If you plan on using an antenna for local digital reception, I strongly recommend an outdoor or attic mounted antenna.

Digital reception is an "all or nothing" situation. Either you get the best picture and sound you have ever seen, or nothing at all. In particular if the incoming channel is weak the picture may fluctuate from beautiful to black every few seconds. Not the best viewing experience.

A good quality antenna mounted in your attic or on the roof will guaranty consistent results. Give us a call for further info. We love to chat about Digital TV!

I hope this gives some insight into current home electronic trends. We actually find it to be great fun. We hope it shows in our work. We also know that most of our business comes from referrals. We would like to thank everyone for their continued support. We promise to stay committed to being the best in the business.

I will (as usual) be available as much as possible. So if you have any questions, feel free to call anytime. My number is 612-868-6129. We have found that many problems are usually resolved quickly and easily over the phone. I'm always available for further discussion.

One last thing; if you do give us a referral that generates new business, we have a new program to provide a few perks to your own home entertainment system. They make a nice reward for giving us a recommendation. Thanks again for your business!

- Dallas

May All your Audio / Video Be High Resolution !

From everyone at Supercalibrations

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mmm... I'll bet Audyssey will make my Miata sound like a Maserati!